

**For Immediate Release:**  
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## **Annual Banding Day to Bring News of Whether City Hall Falcon Chicks are Boys or Girls**

**Event:** Falcon Banding Day comes more than a week early this year, but the event promises to be just as exciting as biologist Glenn Stewart will rappel over the top of the 18-story San José City Hall into the nestbox of the city's beloved falcons. Viewers around the world will be glued to the online FalconCam while local fans will gather around City Hall to watch as parents Clara and Esteban Colbert attempt to fend off the "intruder" dangerously entering their nestbox. Identifying bands will be placed on each of the falcon chicks' legs for scientists to track and collect data. After the banding, falcon fans will discover whether the eyasses (young falcons) are males or females.

Join Glenn Stewart from the University of California's Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group (SCPBRG), San José Peregrine Falcon Alliance members and local falcon fans for this remarkable event.

**Where:** San José City Hall, South side (on Fifth Street off of East San Fernando)  
200 E. Santa Clara Street  
San José, California 95113

Prime views of the rappelling and falcon parents Clara and Esteban Colbert in flight can be seen from the roof of the Fourth Street Garage (enter on Fourth between Santa Clara and San Fernando and either drive to the top or take the elevators closest to San Fernando to the 6<sup>th</sup> floor and walk one flight to the top).

**When:** Monday, May 3, 2010  
8:00 a.m.

*Glenn Stewart will rappel down to the nestbox ledge at 8:00 a.m. to band the falcons and determine their sexes. He will be available for comment at approximately 8:45. Members of the San José Peregrine Falcon Alliance may also be available for interview.*

**Who:** Glenn Stewart, UC Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group  
San José Peregrine Falcon Alliance members  
City Hall Falcon Fans

**Visuals:** SCPBRG Coordinator Glenn Stewart will rappel over the top of City Hall and into the nestbox area, where falcon fans should expect amazing aerial displays, loud “cakking” and shrieking, and dive-bombing runs by Clara and Esteban Colbert as they seek to protect their young from this “intruder.” (The top floors of the exterior stairwell at City Hall will be closed to prevent attacks.)

**Note:** To protect these wild birds, there is no “up-close” access to the nest. The media is invited to capture video footage at the Fifth Street Promenade and the Fourth Street Garage.

The nest-view of the banding activities will be visible on FalconCam at <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/falcons/FalconCam.asp> or [www.scpbrg.org](http://www.scpbrg.org). Viewers may watch the falcon family through via the FalconCam daily, and the City of San José and Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group invite news organizations to use this footage.

**Background:** In early March, the world watched with excitement as Clara laid four eggs in a nestbox high atop a utility shaft on the 285-foot tall San José City Hall. The eggs hatched in the second week of April, though one eyass tragically perished shortly after hatching.

Banding the young falcons is a vital practice, as it contributes to the scientific understanding of the peregrine falcon species and enhances public education efforts. Volunteer observers have identified 10 banded falcons in the Bay Area one year or more after they were banded over the past decade.

Once young falcons are banded, they will soon face their greatest challenge – learning to fly. Researchers estimate they will “fledge” as early as the last week of May.

Soon after the falcon eggs hatched in early April, Mayor Reed and the City of San José asked San José children ages 5 to 17 to help name the falcon eyasses. The deadline for name submissions is May 3 at midnight, and the public will have a chance to vote on the winning names later this week.

During the falcon nesting season, the FalconCam receives more than a million hits each year. The Yahoo! Groups “San José Peregrines” group (<http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/SanJosePeregrines>) has nearly 2,400 members, and inquiries have arrived from as far away as New Zealand, Bolivia, and Egypt.

In 1970, only two known pairs of peregrine falcons remained in the wild in California. Today, thanks to extraordinary conservation work, there are nearly 250 nesting pairs, including City Hall’s Clara and Esteban Colbert.

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